

who characterize heroes like General Wesley Clark, former Commander in Chief of the U.S. European Command, who urged the two-step approach of the Spratt resolution and calls them dreamers.

This is a time that the President, Congress, and the people need to be united. It is why we have introduced the Spratt resolution. This resolution strengthens the President's hand and demonstrates national resolve. It preserves the constitutional authority that resides with Congress and does not abrogate our role to the executive branch.

The people in my district feel strongly about this and have spoken out in town hall meetings. They are deeply opposed to a go-it-alone policy; and while understanding the potential threat posed by Saddam, they want us to pursue the course the President outlined before the United Nations.

Make no mistake, there is broad support for the President and implicit understanding of the awesome responsibility he bears as Commander in Chief. There is also an equal expectation that elected representatives will ask the tough questions and will measure the consequences and collateral damage of our actions. Our system is one of checks and balances; and clearly from my perspective, the use of force preemptively and unilaterally needs to be held in check, debated, discussed and not rubber stamped in a climate of fear and crisis.

The people's House must question the unintended consequences of this new policy. What are those consequences? What will be the collateral damage associated with preemptive unilateral attacks?

I say it can be said no better than our Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Robert Jordan, when I asked him if we were facing a gathering storm in the Middle East. He replied, no, Congressman, you are from New England. Surely you have read the book or seen the movie. This is not a gathering storm. This has all the makings of the perfect storm.

Our relationship with our allies in the Middle East in the prosecution of the war on terrorism is fragile. There is great unrest in the region from economic instability to religious fanatics spewing hate towards the United States. A preemptive unilateral attack on Saddam Hussein could accomplish what Osama bin Laden failed to do, and that is unite the Islamic world in a jihad against the United States. Going it alone may well bring down a tin pan dictator, but will the consequences of that be the recruitment of tens of thousands of new terrorists bound for our shores?

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Thomas Friedman, noted New York Times columnist, spoke at a recent book tour about the long-term consequences of our doctrine, and I was struck by the reaction of a man who simply reached into his wallet and

showed a picture to Friedman of his children.

Nothing else need be said. Support the Spratt amendment.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA), a member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

(Mr. HONDA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for yielding me the time.

I rise this evening as Congress considers one of the most difficult decisions a nation must make. President Bush and leaders from the House negotiated a resolution to authorize the use of force against Iraq. However, this new resolution still allows the President to launch a unilateral, preemptive attack without providing any evidence to Congress that the U.S. is under imminent threat.

The President says that he is willing to go it alone against Iraq as a last resort, but there is no mechanism in this resolution to ensure that it is just that, a last resort.

Let one thing be clear. A vote for this resolution is more than an authorization for use of force. It is a declaration of war, and I will oppose it.

We all agree that it is critical for the United States and the world community to ensure that Saddam Hussein is not developing weapons of mass destruction. I believe we can accomplish this goal by working with the U.N. Security Council to gain consensus on a tough and effective plan to gain unfettered access to inspect Iraq facilities. A powerful multinational force created by the U.N. would carry legitimacy and strong support in the United States and abroad. If the U.N. does not heed our call to action, then other options should be explored.

As of today, it is clear that the administration has yet to exhaust diplomatic options.

Many generals, military strategists and Republican policy-makers have expressed reservations with President Bush's approach to Iraq. Iraq does not exist in a vacuum. The decisions our government makes relative to Iraq will have consequences that will extend to all corners of the world, as well as potentially destabilize the Middle East. Will the concentration of our Armed Forces in Iraq limit our resources for a war against al Qaeda?

Additionally, experts agree that a war against Iraq will be much different than the Gulf War. Intensive, urban combat against an entrenched force is likely. How many thousands of American lives is the administration willing to imperil? What are the long-term plans for the stabilization of Iraq, and how many billions of dollars will this cost American taxpayers?

After September 11, the United States made great strides with the international community in our war

against terror. A unilateral effort by the United States would not only weaken our relationship with our allies but also will increase resentment in the volatile Middle East and further embolden anti-American opinion throughout the world.

We must rid Saddam Hussein of any weapons of mass destruction. However, I urge the administration to continue to work with the U.N. to gain support for a tough resolution with an accompanying national multinational force, if necessary. Diplomatic efforts must continue. This war can still be avoided; and, as such, I cannot vote to put American lives and innocent civilians in harm's way, straight from our war against terror, or create uncertainty that could further hamper our struggling economy.

I will not support this resolution.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 7 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH), a member of the Committee on International Relations, in fact, the Chairman of the Subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific and a man who has great insight into this region.

(Mr. LEACH asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, as all Members know, this resolution involves a difficult set of decisions that neither the Congress nor the executive can duck. Anyone who is not conflicted in their judgment is not thinking seriously.

For myself, I have enormous regard for our President and great respect for his sworn policy advisers, but I have come to the conclusion that this resolution misfits the times and the circumstances. There may be a case for a regime change, but not for war against Iraq and its people.

Because time is brief, I would like to emphasize three points:

One, given the events of 9/11, a doctrine of preemption has a modicum of legitimacy. But the greater our power, the more important it is to use it with restraint. Otherwise, it will be seen as hubristic, with a strong prospect of counterproductive ramifications. Engaging in war the wrong way can too easily jeopardize the underlying conflict against terrorism and undercut core American values and leadership around the world.

Two, there are many so-called end game elements that have not been adequately addressed. They range from the dilemma of street combat to problems of postwar governance to worldwide Muslim reaction.

Three, and most profoundly, this resolution is based on a misunderstanding of modern science as it applies to weapons of war. The assumption is that there is a compelling case to preempt a nuclear weapons program, but what is little understood is that Iraq already controls a weapon of mass destruction more dangerous than nuclear bombs,